173 582 must not be confounded with the town of Dibra, and of which I have no information. Both these two bairaks can marry the former three.

173 166 I was told by members of the groups that the Mirdite-Shala-Shoshi came from the Pestriku mountains, near Djakova, when the Turks were first pressing westward. Before this emigration they had formed part of the Ipek group of tribes and were all Christian. (There is some reason to believe that at one time the Mirdites were Orthodox.) They further stated that when the Turks took Scutari and were harrying the land they fled back for a time to their old Pestriku mountains, and only returned to their present position some 259 years ago. The name "Mirdite" is of late occurrence—about the middle of the seventeenth century. It is possible that before their second shifting they were known only as Dukagini. Of Lek Dukagin they are extremely proud, and state that the Bijelopavlitchi (sons of White Paul) in Montenegro are de- 292 scended from his nephew, Pal i bardhe (Paul the White). They declared 765 Skender Beg to have been related to him, and for this reason the Mirdite women wear the black giurdan in mourning for him, worn otherwise only by men.

614 582 These three bairaks, Orosho, Spachi, and Kusneni, marry principally with Kthela and Luria.

KTHELA

701 614 In war Kthela marches with Mirdita. These two had the right to lead the tribes to all wars in the South. Hoti led to all wars in the North.

619 Kthela consists of three bairaks: Kthela, all Catholic; Selati and Perlati, mixed Catholic and Moslem.

4. The Wholly Moslem Tribes

619 779 186 These lie for the most part east of the Christian groups, on the more fertile and lower-lying lands. They were reluctant to admit foreigners and averse to being questioned. Since I visited them they have been largely exterminated by the Serbs and Montenegrins, and how much is left of their former strength and number is unknown.

DIBRA GROUP

619 614 779 582 1. *Luria.*—Was the head of the group and consisted of one bairak of some two hundred houses, in twenty of which there were some Catholics. In 1908 Mohammedanism was making rapid progress. When Christian, which it was till recently, it married as a rule with

2: Durham B-5 (ca. 1910)1928 EG1 Albania EG1

Mirdita. Since adopting Islam it has married into the two other Moslem tribes of the group, Matija and Dibra.

2. *Matija* is wholly Moslem. It had a very bad reputation when I was travelling in Albania, and was so much averse to foreigners that I did not visit it. It was about the only tribe that refused to accept blood-gelt and insisted on blood, and the more civilized tribes of Maltsia e Madhe used to say: "We are not so bad as Matija." It was notorious for constant cattle-stealing from the herds wintering on the plains and was said to consist of about twelve hundred houses. It has since come before the public, as its chief, Ahmed Zogu, with a large number of armed men at his back, aspired to rule Albania. He was expelled by the Albanians in 1924, but was returned forcibly to the country by the support of Belgrade, and it is said of other Powers, who saw in him a ready tool to assist their schemes. By first giving territory to the Serbs and then great concessions to Italy he has now put Albania into a difficulty, and she has become a bone of contention between Jugoslavia and Italy. In 1908, when all the tribes were eager for an independent Albania, no one could have foreseen its destinies would be thrown into the hands of the wildest and least educated of the tribes.

3. *Dibra.*—This tribe, too, I found unvisitable. It had as bad a reputation as Matija, but has suffered cruelly as a result of war, for the frontier has been drawn between the Dibrani and the town of Dibra, their market. This has caused great discontent both sides of the frontier, and some fighting. A frontier under no circumstances should cut a tribe land in half—if those who draw it wish to maintain peace.

Dibra and Matija formed part of the Principality of Skender Beg in the old days. Luria belonged to Dukagini.

4. *Arnji.*—A small independent tribe on the left bank of the river Mola. It is all Moslem and an offshoot of Berisha. I was the only foreigner who had passed through it for many years, and a long debate was held before I was admitted as guest. The women all wore Mirdite dress, and I was told the tribe married mainly Mirdite women.

PRIZREN GROUP

1. *Ljuma.*—When I knew it, this was a large and strong Moslem tribe. In 1912–13 it suffered very heavily. A Serb officer in my presence described how he and his battalion had bayoneted all the women and children in part of the tribe, because "women bear men," and laughed till he choked over his beer. The Serbs were "liberating the land from the Turkish yoke." On subsequent inquiry I learnt that some 1,400 persons had been massacred. Part of this tribe is now under Serb rule.

2: Durham B-5 (ca. 1910)1928 EG1 Albania EG1

Along with Ljuma were grouped Bruti, Mal i zi (the Black Mountain, not to be confounded with Montenegro), Rechi, Vlas, and some other small groups—all offshoots of older tribes, especially of Shala and the Fandi bairak of Mirdita.

DJAKOVA GROUP

1. *Gashi.*—All Moslem. About eight hundred houses. I did not visit it.

2. *Hashi.*—A very large tribe of, it was said, about a thousand houses, almost all Moslem. They had never seen a woman in European dress, and were greatly amused at my arrival armed only with an umbrella. They occupy the Pestriku mountains, traditionally a former home of the Mirdites. They were hospitable and allowed me to pass through their land, but were so unused to foreigners and so afraid that their admission might bring about foreign annexation that I asked no questions about origin or anything personal.

3. *Tropopoja.*—Three hundred Moslem houses—I did not visit. The town of Djakova was founded by an offshoot of the Merturi-Berisha, and I was told derives its name from St. Jak (St. Giacomo), and that its founders were Christians. But when I visited it almost the whole of its large population was Moslem. There was a small Catholic church and school. Except for one hundred Serb families the town was solid Albanian. Two stocks claimed descent from the original founders: the Merturi and the Vula. The Vula was a large and powerful family, and I was told I could travel anywhere safely with a Vula as guide. I did so. He carried no weapon.

A large number of villages surround Djakova. These I found to be all Albanian, tracing descent from Berisha, Shala, Fandi, and other bairaks of Mirdita, as do many inhabitants of the town. None intermarry with their tribe of origin. The villages were mixed Catholic and Moslem. There were no Serb villages. The district is now part of Jugoslavia, and the population doubtless much changed by immigration and emigration.

IPEK GROUP

1. *Ipek* (now called Petch) and its villages.—A large Albanian population of many stocks flowed down from the mountains when the Serbs evacuated it in 1640 and reoccupied the lands formerly taken from their ancestors.

Some villages traced origin from Berisha and Shala. Dechani was populated by descendants of the ancient Shala stock (*q.v.*). This

2: Durham B-5 (ca. 1910)1928 EG1 Albania EG1

district, too, is now part of Jugoslavia, and has suffered much at the hands of Serb and Montenegrin. The lands are being colonized by Serbs. Many Albanians have fled into Albania.

2. *Gusinje.*—This, in all probability, descends from some of the last of the Bosniaks who trekked south. Though largely Serbophone, the pre-war Gusinjans were so violently anti-Serb that when the Treaty of Berlin awarded them to Montenegro they resisted annexation so fiercely that the plan was dropped. Terrible vengeance was taken for this by the Montenegrins in 1913 and the Serbs in 1919. Men, women, and children were mercilessly slaughtered. Some thousands fled to Scutari for protection. A British force was there then. So greatly had these refugees suffered that they preferred to die of fever in the Scutari swamps to returning to Gusinje, where, as they said, the Serbs had thrown down food to attract a crowd of hungry children and had then thrown a bomb into the midst of them.

But the Powers permitted the Serbs to keep the district. The advent of the Serb has, in fact, reproduced the conditions of the Middle Ages, when the Turks advanced. I note the facts in order to enable an observer fifty or more years hence to learn how much of an original population is wiped out or absorbed by a conqueror.

3. *Plava.*—I did not visit, as it was opposed to admitting strangers. I was told by old Marash Hutzi, of Hoti, that part of Plava derived from Hoti, but that part was of very old stock called Pagani; but he did not know if Pagani were Moslems or Catholics. "Pagani," or "Paganezi," occurs as a proper name in some Durazzo and Ragusa documents of the thirteenth century. Possibly it was a usual term for "country people" among those of the coast and the towns who spoke a Latin dialect. The "Pagani" of Plava may be an "island" of an ancient population, e.g. Vlah.

To sum up briefly, the present tribes of Albania are in all probability mainly descended from the pre-Slav Balkan inhabitants. In the Serb Empire the herdsmen were recognized as Vlah and Albanian. A very large proportion of the Albanian mountains were, as we have seen, given along with their inhabitants to Serbian monasteries. Under Turkish rule the power of the monasteries naturally dwindled rapidly, and the Albanian serfs, more especially as they were largely, if not entirely, Catholic, would as rapidly break loose from servitude.

That the refugees who came into these mountains later were also of the herdsman class there is little reason to doubt. They came with their flocks, and are to this day strictly pastoral.

As we shall see in studying the Montenegrin tribes, the ultimate fate of these refugees has been largely influenced by whether they settled in land which was under the Orthodox Church, or whether

2: Durham B-5 (ca. 1910)1928 EG1 Albania EG1
Montenegrins EF5

SECTION VIII

SOME BALKAN TABOOS. IRON. HAIR

1. Propitiating the Stranger

In a land where magic is still practised it is not surprising to find some ancient taboos still alive.

Of the many things that mankind fears, the unknown is perhaps the most dreaded. Therefore in old days, when travellers were scarce, save on well-marked trade routes, the stranger was an object of great suspicion. Who could tell what evil spells he might work? Magic was then the great danger; to-day it is "politik," the mysterious power of secret diplomacy. The stranger is still suspect in lands much nearer home.

In those parts of the Balkans where the tribal system was still in force, the reluctance of the tribe to admit a stranger was still marked. Off the beaten track a guide was a necessity, not merely to show the way but to act as a passport and explain one. In many places the peasant believed firmly in hidden treasure, and every stranger was suspected of knowing the spell by which to acquire and run off with it. A reason for the stranger's presence is required.

Krsto Pejovitch, when I first went up-country with him, began to explain me so soon as we got off the highroad. He was showman, so to speak, and I was the monkey to his organ-grinding. On arrival at a han he would begin loudly: "She can read and write several languages. She can make pictures without a machine [i.e. draw]. She can sing. She can," etc. According to Krsto there were few things I could not do. Moreover, the Montenegrin proverb says: "Long hair, short wits, a woman's head," and as I wore my hair short, an uncommon thing in those days, the simple folk accepted the fact that my wits were necessarily long. Krsto would point this out, and add, in an aside, to bachelors: "She is not married, and God knows how rich."

When I protested, he declared this was the right way to conduct a tour, and he knew all about it. I had come to see real Montenegrin life—and I saw it. But so long as I live I shall feel for the luckless dancing bear who is prodded up to perform once more when dead tired, and remember the days when I could not make a note or a sketch except before a changing crowd as curious as monkeys, which flocked to see a woman who could not only write but write English. As often

as not the schoolmaster picked up each sheet to examine as I finished it. How many times, when hoarse and exhausted, I have howled the "British Grenadiers," or some such ditty, only to have it rapturously encored!

In return I was crammed with food and drink.

One should never look a gift-horse in the mouth; but the suspicion with which a stranger is received, the endless questions that must be answered, and finally the lavish hospitality when it is decided to admit him, recall the fact that among primitive people it is necessary to propitiate the stranger, lest, offended, he should work evil to the house. By eating under the roof he acquires a temporary membership of the family. In the Albanian mountains, and, indeed, in the towns, I have been given hospitality with the words, "Buk i kryp i zemer i em" ("Bread and salt and my heart").

In Montenegro, rakia was the universal symbol of hospitality. When, after weeks of showing off my "parlour tricks," we returned to Krsto's house at Njegushi, he was triumphant. He confessed he had had grave doubts as to the propriety of a warrior going round the country as servant to a woman. But, managed in his manner, the tour had been a great success. I had, he said, made an excellent impression, and on one point only had offended. If he might say so, it was thought improper for an unmarried woman to imitate the manners of the officers. Greatly surprised, I asked what military action I had performed. He explained that in Montenegro all modest women blew their noses "like this"—here he performed loudly upon his own, with his fingers—whereas the officers who had been trained abroad used a handkerchief, and so my doing so was thought decidedly "fast." I conformed carefully to many a local custom, but in spite of Krsto's request I drew the line at "the finger trick."

Upon the journey he repeatedly affirmed that I had not come to search for treasure. At Pirlitor upon Durmitor, the legendary site of the castle of Voyvoda Momchilo, the belief in treasure was very strong. The local headmen followed me about the alleged ruins, though by nothing short of magic could I have moved the great stones. I purposely dropped my heavy pocket-knife, and the clank of metal on stone brought them up swiftly with the cry: "Has she found it?"

In Serbia, where I travelled without a guide, for I was raw to the Balkans at that time, I found the stranger taboo very strong. As I was ignorant of their politics, I merely thought they were crazy when they dogged me perpetually and went my way. When the powers in Belgrade ascertained, by means of countless cipher telegrams, that I was really a British subject and not a Karageorgevitch in disguise, as they had been foolish enough to suppose, then suddenly the hospitality phase

2: Durham B-5 (ca. 1910)1928 EG1 Albania EG1
Historical Yugoslavia EF2

H 262 264 562 576 to them. Any women sitting by the roadside when a man passed at once arose and gave humble greeting. Krsto always was very lordly on these occasions. He always ate with me—partly, I think, to convince himself he was not my servant but my equal. Poor Iké fed apart afterwards. Once when he was absent a week I begged her to feed with me, for it was ridiculous to make two meals of it. But the mere idea of doing anything so unseemly distressed her so that she burst into tears and prayed me to excuse her. She said it was a thing that could not be done; it would "shame" me.

H 576 562 554 For a man to wait on a woman was very humiliating. A mounted gendarme, a Bosnian Moslem, was once ordered to escort me in Turkish territory. He had conscientious scruples about obeying a woman. After a midday halt at a "kavana," he hurried down to get the horses ready, leaving his rifle on the balcony. Presently he shouted up to no one in particular, "Give me my rifle." As it was alongside of me I handed it down. His ruse had succeeded, and he cried with childish glee, "She has waited on me! she has waited on me!" Honour was satisfied.

A 554 264 Among the Albanian tribesmen it was considered very degrading to eat with a woman. I remember how a Kastrati man jeered at the Austrian Consul. A poor creature, indeed. He drank coffee and ate meat and bread, and let his wife eat at the same time. A shameless woman! A despicable man. The Kastrati man would not let his wife so misbehave. He would never eat with a woman, not he.

A [186] It is amusing how often ambassadors, generals, admirals, ministers, and other exalted beings are looked down on with contempt by the native whose respect and admiration they fondly imagine they are arousing.

When I arrived at Vuthaj, a Moslem Albanian village, where they had never before entertained a strange female, there was a very long powwow as to the correct course to pursue. I had gone there on the invitation of a headman. It was decided that I was too important a guest to feed with the harem. I was to rank as a man and feed with the chiefs. But in order to comply with their sense of fitness I was helped last of all, even after my horse-boy. And so honour was satisfied. The women waited at table—unveiled—but I did not enter their apartment and had no communication with them.

A [576] Among the Christian Mirdites at the house of the Kapetan, where I was treated with great honour, the younger men of the family waited at table, as did Chaucer's Squire, and no woman was allowed to come near me at all. I heard a giggling crowd trying to get a peep at me through the crack of the door, but they were chivied away by a male, and my suggestion that I should see them was met by the statement that they were too modest.

2: Durham B-5 (ca. 1910)1928 EG1 Albania EG1
Yugoslavia EF1
Montenegrins EF5

male jealousy is quite insufficient; for, in fact, the veiled Moslem woman can "carry on" incognito with far more ease than can her unveiled and recognizable Christian sister. Nor, at any rate, in the lands we are considering, is the Christian husband a whit less jealous than the Moslem. All Christian Scutari was once in a hubbub over the scandalous and shocking conduct of the Austrian doctor and Italian Consul-General. These two gentlemen had publicly exchanged wives on the Consular lawn-tennis court, and these shameless women had each played against her own husband.

I was seriously consulted and failed to convince the disgusted Scutarenes that the proceeding was harmless. How could you tell where it would end?

When I first went to Scutari, in 1901, all the Catholic married women wore a long lace veil pinned across the lower part of the face and draped over the head. Unmarried Catholic girls still, I believe, shroud their heads entirely in a thick cotton wrapper, leaving only a peep-hole.

Most of the Orthodox peasants of Macedonia, both Bulgar and Greek, wore a large handkerchief folded into a triangle over their heads and arranged the two long corners across the mouth and tucked them in securely on either side. The mouth was very often thus covered, too, by Montenegrin maidens; and by Christian women in Bosnia.

Sir James George Frazer states, giving many examples, that the covering of the mouth is connected with the belief that the soul may escape by it or evil spirits enter by it, and that complete veiling is probably a protection also from the Evil Eye.

That the mouth is the important spot is shown by the Moslem girls of Bosnia, who, when caught unveiled at a well, or on the hill-side with their flocks, will sometimes seize a handkerchief hastily between their teeth and then seem to think themselves sufficiently protected.

Now evil eyes and bad spirits swarm in the Balkans; and the soul always escapes by the nose or mouth. "My soul was in my nose all the time!" cries the Montenegrin when telling of an escape from danger.

"That brought your soul into your nose!" said the horse-boy when my horse nearly came down with me. The tying of a handkerchief over the holes through which it might escape is a very reasonable precaution.

Women who do not protect themselves with a veil, deck themselves and their children with a mass of beads and dingle-dangles. These things are to act as it were as lightning-conductors to attract the glance of the Evil Eye and save their persons from it. The veiled and hooded woman wears no ornament outside her outdoor garment.

The bride, both Catholic and Moslem, is veiled from head to foot.

2: Durham B-5 (ca. 1910)1928 EG1 Albania EG1 ●
Historical Yugoslavia EF2
Balkan Peoples E13
Montenegrins EF5

Some Balkan Taboos. Iron. Hair

angry and said: 'Do you dead dogs dare threaten the Roman realm? I will shave off those locks of yours and then cut off your heads.'

"He then imprisoned them for six months and released them terrified, and for some time the Avars submitted to Rome and gave no trouble."

The Nemanja kings, as seen on the frescoes at Dechani, all wore the moustache. Their beards are very small. The hair of the head is completely hidden by the crown.

To-day in the Balkans the beard is worn almost solely by the Orthodox priesthood and the Moslem dervishes and hodjas. Thus the holy men of both faiths observe the hair taboo.

Laymen in all parts where the modern fashion of clean-shaving has not penetrated always wear the moustache. Perhaps vague memories of the days when the hair was burnt as ultimate disgrace haunt the mind, for the clean-shaven man, I found, was a creature condemned and despised.

In Krsto's hut I mentioned that my brother was clean-shaven, and the company, abashed, stared at their toes and were speechless. Then someone, deeply shocked, said: "No noble family will give him a wife." And kind old Pope Gjuro, wishing to be polite, said that such things might be done in London, but in Montenegro it was better not to speak of them. Whereupon the repulsive subject was dropped.

In both Albania and Montenegro a hairless man is called by the Turkish word "Chosé." Bald heads in both lands are very rare. I never saw more than a slight thinning on the top. A really bald, shining head is thought an awful thing. We were once discussing the American regulations for emigrants. A Montenegrin who had been to America angrily denounced the injustice of the health inspectors at the landing-place. "I myself," he cried, "saw them allow a man with no hair on the top of his head—a most horrible sight—to pass. And they stopped a poor boy who had only a few little bare spots on his head and said he was diseased!"

In old Serbian ballads the hero's moustache is his glory. Mighty fine were these warriors.

> And there came five horsemen clad in black;
> At their head rode a hero upon a raven steed.
> His black moustachios reached below his shoulders
> And hung to the pistols in his sash.
> His breastplate ("toké") glittered through his moustachios
> As doth the moon when fifteen days old
> Shine through the branches of a fir-tree.
> Lo and behold, O my brother Mujo!
> Next to them come three horsemen
> Clad in white cloth and riding upon greys.
> At their head is a warrior on a grey steed,
> And his fair moustachios reach to his shoulders, etc.

3: Redlich S-3 (no date) 1936 EG1 Albania EG1

ALBANIAN FLAG

The Albanian national flag is blood-red in color with the double-headed black eagle in the center and the Scanderbeg Golden Helmet above the double-headed black eagle.

The Albanian ships and merchant marine carry the flag of commerce, which is red-black-red in color.

3:Redlich S-3 (no date) 1936 EG1 Albania EG1

562 tissues, is made by the women who are so [846] occupied with other duties! The Albanian wife in the cities is also acquainted with domestic industry—she knows not laziness. Many of them, being good housewives, try to flatter the tastes of their husbands. Culinary arts are by no means alien to her: her cakes and tarts may easily cause the best patissiers of Paris to cast an envious eye into her kitchen. She is her husband's companion, his daily associate, and he keeps the lady of his hearth informed of all his affairs and often asks her advice and seeks her suggestions.

Womanhood is universally respected in Albania. They are held in the highest regard in all places to the extent that she may go any place unmolested and even in a man's company he is the one who derives protection through her.

[728] Negotiations for a truce of peace have formerly been intrusted many times to women, for they were allowed protection and safety in an enemy's camp where a man would never have survived.

• 186 Even in Albanian history women have played many important roles; as above-mentioned she has been endowed with strong

nationalistic tendencies. One of the most extreme women who possessed these qualities was that renowned national heroine, Queen Teuta of Illyria.

The same proud and patriotic attitude exists throughout Albanian history in her women. They have been known to make supreme sacrifices willingly for the cause of Albania's liberty and independence. When the Sultan's armies marched upon Scutari, it was the women who gave the alarm and urged their husbands and brothers into battle. When men fell mortally wounded the women filled the gaps and fought courageously. They carried the mutilated bodies of their loved ones and tenderly cared for them, while others urged the warriors on into the fray. It is also related that should a husband, son or brother turn their backs upon the enemy, they are refused entrance into their homes. Albanian women do not tolerate cowardice.

This selfsame indomitable will power and courageous spirit was portrayed in the mother of Ali Pasha Tepelene of Janina. It was to her that he owed the success of his early youth, paving the way for his illustrious career in later years. His mother, the noble

6: Lane T-3 (no date) 1923 EG1 Albania EG1

stood that the killing was an accident and it caused no blood feud. Accidents, he remarked, will happen anywhere, and he spoke of the death toll of automobiles, which at that moment seemed as far from my knowledge as the twenty centuries that separated us from them.

"Through the Land of the Eagle the news is sung," the second gendarme began a new song, thumbs against his ears and sixty-pound pack on his back, as he ascended the rocks above us. Cheremi took it up, repeating each line as the other improvised it, and under his breath Rexh translated them for me, storing them away in his memory, from which I later transferred them to my notebook. As I listened I glanced at Rrok Perolli, disguised servant of the new government about which they were making the song, but his face wore a cheerful and unconcerned expression, like a mask so perfect that it seems real.

"Through the Land of the Eagle the news is sung—— (It has a double rhyme as they sing it, Mrs. Lane, but I do not know the English to make it rhyme in your language)," said Rexh, apologetically.

"What have the men of Tirana been doing?
I am a son of the mountain eagles;
I do not give up my nest while there is life in my claws;
I do not yield to the gendarmes!
I will drown them in their own blood.
Rise, rise, and go to the door.
There is a sergeant with twenty soldiers.

6: Lane T-3 (no date) 1923 EG1 Albania EG1

[533] Ho! Ho! Sergeant, I am not the man you think!
186 I will not bow and be led to the slaughter.
I will not be killed like a lamb for the men of Tirana,
I am a goat and will fight!"

"What do they mean about sergeants and soldiers?" I asked Perolli, and he said, "These tribes do not understand that the new government in Tirana is an all-Albanian government. They don't think as a nation; they think as tribes. They think the government is a Tirana government, trying to destroy their liberty as the Romans and the Turks and the Austrians and Italians and the Serbs and the Greeks and the Peace Council tried to do. They know that the Peace Conference in Paris arranged to divide Albania into three parts, giving one to Greece, one to Italy, and one to Jugo-Slavia (and would have done it if Greece and Serbia had been strong enough at the moment to grab a third of a hornets' nest and if we hadn't driven out Italy). They know there is a connection between the Peace Conference and the League of Nations, so, now that the Albanian government is a member of the League, they think that the men of Tirana have joined their enemies. They were so dangerous that we had to send soldiers up here to burn the houses of the Shala chiefs. But everything will be all right as soon as we can get the government going and begin building schools and roads up here. They just don't understand yet."

000 Political discussion was cut short by one of the men who had run ahead a few miles to inform the

6: Lane T-3 (no date) 1923 EGl Albania EGl

539 In my disappointment I spoke too quickly, forgetting the excellence of Rexh as an interpreter. "It isn't Albanian, after all; it's Greek," I said. "I remember now that I read it years ago."

"Yes, so do I," said Alex, and her words crossed those of Rexh, who had picked up mine and was turning them into Albanian.

"*Po*," said the old man, with irony. "It is a Greek song—it is as Greek as Lec i Madhe."

[186] I had thanked the old man with an insult, for even the Ghegs keep smoldering in their hearts the knowledge that the Greeks hold Janina, and the memory of the burned villages and slaughtered Albanians of Epirus is only six years old. In an unguarded instant I had made for myself one of those recollections that burn in sleepless night hours. I called myself a fool, while I heard my voice trying to bury the irremediable mistake by
173 hurried words. "What is Lec i Madhe?"

186 Frances and Alex were busy in a scrap bag of mythology, and Rexh replied. "I don't know what you call him in English, Mrs. Lane. Lec i Madhe was our king of very long years ago, who went down from the mountains and took all the cities of the world. He was the son of our twentieth king, and he was a very great fighter. I think surely you must know him by some name in English. We call him Lec i Madhe; it means, the Great Lec. Because we had other kings before him called Lec."

"Lec i Madhe?" cried Frances, headlong at

6: Lane T-3 (no date) 1923 EGl Albania EGl

173 the word. "Alexander the Great! What are
186 they saying about him?"

The young man in the American army shirt had listened not at all to the story of the ora, but he heard Frances's words and misunderstood them. "Alexander the Greek?" he repeated. "Alexander was not Greek; he was Albanian."

"You mean his mother was an Albanian," said Frances.

The young man smiled scornfully. "And you think his father was not? When has a king of Albania married a foreign wife? Albanians marry Albanians. When Filip the Second married, he married a woman of his own people, but of another tribe, as the custom has always been. Do the Greeks dare to say that Filip was a Greek? If he had been Greek, no Albanian chief would have given him a daughter for wife. Even then we Malisori[1] despised the Greeks."

"But Philip of Macedonia—was a Macedonian," I said, feebly. "Wasn't he a Macedonian? The Macedonians weren't Albanians, were they?"

"Ask the old man what he knows about Lec i Madhe, Rexh," said Frances. But the old man, drawing solace from the amber mouthpiece with his toothless lips, still brooded upon the song of the man of Mali Sharit.

"The things which I have told happened to an Albanian of the tribe of the Mali Sharit," he said. "The song of them has been sung by the

[1] Mountaineers.

PEAKS OF SHALA

173 Malisori from the days when they happened till
186 the days of my own father's manhood. The Greeks are a little, inquisitive people who have played with paper and with writing since they first came to our shores in boats, long ago—a hundred hundred years before the Romans came. We gave them shelter then, we let them come to our shores, we let them come from the cold seas and stay on our land, and they are guests who steal from their hosts. They have killed our people; they have taken Janina. Let them leave our songs and our kings alone. Greek!" said he, muttering. "They will be claiming the Mali Shoshit, next!"

ooo Excitement so shook my fingers that the writing wavers on the page. The blotted and rain-smeared notebook before me now evokes like a crystal before the gazer the picture of that old man in the warm duskiness of the house of Sadiri Luka. the streaming of rain on the roof, the smell of coffee and cigarette smoke, the soft sound of moccasined feet going down the corridor to confession at the knee of Padre Marjan.

173 "The Greeks came to your shores?" I said, goading the old man on. "But it is written in the books that they came from the lands watered by the Danube, by the river that flows through Belgrade to the Black Sea. It is written that they came down through the Balkans to build their great and beautiful cities on the shores of the Egean. And no one writes about the Albanians. Where did the Albanians come from?"

[Author - - Analyst]

6: Lane T-3 (no date) 1923 EGl Albania EGl

These words created a perceptible sensation. 173
Hazel eyes and blue eyes turned upon me in amazement. A middle-aged man who had come from the room of confession to stack his rifle with others beside the fireplace and to roll a cigarette stopped with the tobacco half poured and stared at me. "It is not written where the Shqiptars came from?" said he, in a tone of stupefaction. "But surely all the world knows where the Shqiptars came from."

I assured him that it was written only that the Greeks, when they came, found some savage tribes whose origin was unknown. But it was thought that these tribes were old peoples of Europe who died out when the peoples of to-day came—I stopped, to give them no clew to the migrations of Aryans from India—who died out, I said, when the great civilizations of to-day came into the world. And the first of these civilizations was the Greek.

The newcomer finished his cigarette thoughtfully, put it in its holder, lighted it from a coal, and summed up his conclusions in an Albanian proverb. "It is very true," said he, "that only the spoon knows what is in the dish."

"And when we speak of the Greeks," said [186] •
another chief, "let us remember the saying of our fathers: The tree said to the wood cutter, 'Why do you kill me, for I have done nothing to you.' And the wood cutter replied, 'You gave me the handle for the ax.'"

The old man's irritation had died. He looked

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771 of the cross, and hears in his forests the voices
184 of the ora. This vague religion is unconscious. The Albanian himself does not recognize it, but it is the resisting subsoil which has prevented [582] acknowledged religions from taking deep root. Families of all religions freely intermarry; [292] Mohammedan women are unveiled, or Catholic women veiled, according to the fashion of their town; in the mountains neither are veiled. In Guri-Bardhe, a village of the Mati known as being fanatically Mohammedan, the women were quite willing to pose for photographs, and Limoni, the chief, was defying the local *hodji* by demanding a modern school; the *hodji* taught the children nothing worth while, he said. In the spring [798] religious festivals—the two Easters and the fast of Ramazan—all Albanians in Tirana took part, and Mohammedan fezzes were thick in the midnight processions carrying Easter candles.

[186] There has never been friction along the frontiers of the three religions. All Albanians united to resist the Romanizing and Germanizing influence of Catholicism, the attempt of Shiek ul Islam to cripple the Albanian language by a Turkish alphabet (a revolution was fought, and won, for the Latin alphabet in 1910), and the Hellenizing propaganda of certain Orthodox Churchmen.

184 But there is a real division in Albania. It lies
578 between the Toshks, or southerners, and the Ghegs, who are the mountaineers. Men who have held their mountain fastnesses and main-

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*669 648 by family ties to the tribesmen across the border and were thus exceptionally placed to smuggle arms, agents, or propaganda into Albania. Moreover, a force of Kossovars acting as the spearhead of the rising would not be resisted as an invasion but fraternally acclaimed as a liberating army. The support of the Kossovars were thus essential to our plans, but most of their leaders inclined towards the Axis Powers, who had promised to unite the region to Albania. Gani alone supported the Allies, so that the Kryeziu family became the natural rallying point for our movement. Indeed, long before we had come on to the scene, Gani had taken steps to organise those Albanians who had taken refuge in Yugoslavia in 1939 from the Italians. In response to Italian pressure, most of them had been confined to remote villages of Bosnia and Voivodina, but Gani provided for their needs and interceded in Belgrade on their behalf. The majority of these exiles were army officers and monarchists, and, although they were glad of Gani's help and money, they were naturally suspicious of the Kryezius as enemies of the King. Gani therefore suggested that, to make sure of their wholehearted support, we should send to Turkey for Abas Kupi, the defender of Durazzo and the most popular of the monarchist leaders.

986 159 Abas Agha Kupi, or Bazi Sani as the tribesmen called him, could neither read nor write: indeed only with difficulty could he sign his name. Born in the nineties, he was, like Skanderbeg, a native of Kruya, where his father had been a respected member of the Bektashi community. One of his uncles had been a passionate Albanian nationalist and had fired the boy's imagination by tales of Turkish prisons and guerilla war. One day, when young Abas was but fifteen years old, nationalist insurgents seized Kruya and hoisted Skanderbeg's flag — the black eagles on the red ground — upon the castle tower. The boy went out to join them, but they told him that he was too young to fight and sent him home in tears. A few days later the town was reoccupied by "loyalist" troops under Essad Pasha, who at once gave orders to pull down the offending flag and restore the Star and Crescent. A soldier climbed on to the tower to carry out the order, but young Abas snatched up his

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father's rifle and shot the man dead. Astonishment or sympathy covered his escape; and he fled to the mountains to hide from Essad's revenge. The Pasha, however, was impressed by the boy's daring, and still more by the success with which he evaded or repelled his pursuers. He resolved to make use of him; paid the blood money for the soldier's death; and admitted Abas to his following. The young man thus became one of the "Essadist" leaders, and during the first World War raised a guerilla band with which he harassed the communications of the Austrian army. In the troubled times which followed the war he took sides with Mustafa Kruya against Zog and was declared an outlaw by the Tirana Government. For two years he defied the Zogist forces in the mountains of Kruya, until in 1924 Fan Noli and Mustafa drove Zog into exile and themselves seized power. Abas Kupi had set great hopes on the new regime, but they were disappointed; and when Zog and Tsena in their turn attacked the Government he refused to come to its help. Instead he remained in Kruya, a spectator of the civil war.

Zog had learnt to respect this illiterate guerilla genius, and, in the hopes that the poacher might turn gamekeeper, offered him the command of the Kruya region. Abas Kupi accepted and from that time became Zog's devoted lieutenant; nor were their relations darkened by the jealousy which, in politics, so often destroys the friendships of able men. Abas Kupi recognised that his ignorance barred him from the highest offices; and the king felt safe to reward the subject without fear of raising the rival. In Kruya, however, Abas ruled as dictator, untrammelled by the control of the Central Government. His administration was popular; and he preserved an exceptional degree of law and order in the district, mainly thanks to a private intelligence service, so widespread in its ramifications that he was often able to restrain potential malefactors by disclosing foreknowledge of their designs. It is said that, during the celebrations which attended the King's marriage, two visiting dignitaries — tribal chiefs from the North — were robbed in a Tirana café. Abas Kupi was informed and at once summoned the chief pickpockets of the city to his office. Within half an

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hour he had extracted from them the identity of the criminals and the fruits of the crime. By a gentleman's agreement there were no prosecutions, but the victims were fully reimbursed, with ten per cent interest for their trouble.

On Good Friday of 1939 King Zog entrusted Abas Kupi with the defence of Durazzo. His forces only consisted of a battalion of Albanian gendarmes and some tribal levies but, although hopelessly outmatched in man-power and in guns, he kept two of the Duce's divisions at bay for more than thirty-six hours. This gallant action, the only effective resistance offered to the Italian invasion, covered the King's escape and made Abas Kupi a national hero. Indeed, as we learned from our agents, the mountain bards had already added verses celebrating his defence of Durazzo to the long epic poem in which the great exploits of Albanian history are recorded.

Gani's advice that we should seek the help of Abas Kupi seemed to us sound, and we therefore asked Stirling to approach him, for he had known him well in Albania. Accordingly, a few days after the capitulation of France, the two met in the dingy lodgings which Abas had taken in Constantinople. The Albanians are usually given to prolonged ceremonial greetings, but, although it was five years since he had last seen Stirling, Abas Kupi asked at once:

"Will you English fight on?"

"I give you my word we will," Stirling answered.

"Thank God," said Abas Kupi, "for now the Italians are at last fair game for both of us." Then, his mind at rest, he remembered his manners and, with a smile, produced the customary greetings and enquiries: "*Tungjatjeta! A je mirë? A je shendosh? A je burri fortë?*" ("May your life be prolonged! Are you well? Are you in good heart? Are you a strong man?")

After devious transactions the necessary passports were obtained and Abas Kupi was brought to Yugoslavia. At our first meeting I was struck, as others have been, by his pronounced likeness, especially in profile, to certain of the portraits of Napoleon; a likeness accentuated by a lock of hair brushed forward on his forehead to hide the deep scar of a bullet wound

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GANI BEY KRYEZIU AS AN OFFICER IN THE ALBANIAN ARMY
(From a photograph taken in 1927)

ABAS KUPI
(Photographed in exile, 1950)

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breeches and a grey " redingote " which heightened his likeness to Napoleon ; but he looked older and leaner than when I had seen him in Belgrade. We sat cross-legged round the hearth in the upper room ; and when the exchange of formal greetings was done Maclean spoke of the aims of our Mission. He explained that we had been charged to help the Ghegs in their war against the Germans and to co-ordinate their operations with the overall strategy of the Allies. He then reviewed the military and political situation of the contending Powers, leading up to the conclusion that an Allied victory was at hand. The time had therefore come for all Albanians to lay aside their personal differences and to unite to wrest from the invaders the independence for which they had already sacrificed so much.

Abas Kupi replied at some length, but, it seemed to me, wearily, as if he had lost faith in the power of words. He welcomed us to his regions with warmth and courtesy, and expressed his deep indignation that Albanians should have been responsible for the capture of Brigadier Davies. A harsh winter and lack of arms had forced him on to the defensive ; but now that we had come he hoped that we would soon make it possible for him to lead a new and final rising against the Germans. From these preliminaries he turned to questions of policy. His people were at a loss to understand why Albania was not among the United Nations, or why the Allies did not recognise King Zog who, as he remarked, had been a victim of Fascist aggression when Mr. Neville Chamberlain still believed in peace. They were anxious, moreover, for the future of the Kossovo and of Southern Albania and hoped for some assurance that these provinces would not be ceded to Yugoslavia or Greece without first consulting the wishes of the local populations. Our support of the Albanian Communists was also a cause of deep concern ; and it was widely believed that, at the Teheran Conference, Albania had been assigned to the Soviet sphere of influence.

" We Albanians," he concluded, " are few and poor, but in proportion to our strength we have made great efforts and great sacrifices in the common cause. So far we have received

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*669 648 186 no encouragement nor recognition from the great Allies; but I still put my trust in Great Britain as I did in 1940. I have fought and I will continue to fight, but you must send me arms and make some gesture that you have our country's interest at heart, for we are Albanian patriots and not British agents."

Maclean turned a gentle answer, judging that it would be premature to try and thrash out these delicate problems at our first meeting. He proposed, however, that I should go to Abas Kupi's Headquarters to study his difficulties and explain our policy in greater detail. The Agha at once agreed, and, before leaving us, promised to send guides within a few days to bring me to him. Meanwhile we turned to the task of reorganising the British Missions.

4

SEYMOUR and Hare had established their base in Derye because it was near to the Tirana road and thus suitable as an observation post. The very conditions, however, which made the village easily accessible to visitors or couriers from the capital exposed it to the danger of sudden enemy raids. The British officers were thus obliged to lead a strictly conspiratorial existence, which severely restricted the scope of their activities. They seldom ventured out in daylight; most of their business was conducted through intermediaries; and fear of detection forced them to relegate their wireless set and operator to a rear base in the mountains. This rear base was a day's march away, so that all communictions with Headquarters in Italy suffered a delay of at least twenty-four hours. The drawbacks of this situation had hitherto been outweighed by its advantages; Seymour and Hare might indeed have enjoyed greater freedom and security in some remote mountain village, but, under winter conditions, they would then have been cut off from their chief sources of intelligence and supply. Now, however, that the snow was melting and that the mountain paths were practicable once more, Derye ceased to be convenient without becoming safe. There were already rumours that the Germans had wind of the Mission's whereabouts; and Maclean therefore

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marching south-eastwards towards its source. Then, by the gaping ruins of Pazaari-Urs, a model market village burnt by the Italians, we had crossed over to the right bank and returned north-westward, marching towards the sea. Now, ten days after we had come down into the valley, we forded the river once more, and began the ascent of the great Skanderbeg range which divides Mati from Kruya. It was only ten days since we had sung for joy to escape from the rawness of the mountains; but the full heat of summer was already upon us, and we were glad to climb again into their clearer air and shake the dust of the sultry valley from our feet.

We toiled uphill all day in the burning glare of the sun, and in the late afternoon reached the head of the pass whence the way ran down to Kruya. There Abas Kupi called a halt, and, while the men sat down and rolled cigarettes, we climbed a hundred feet or so to the summit of a projecting and rocky knoll. Four thousand feet below us lay the plain, with its broad acres, turgid inland lagoons, and the wrinkled promontory of Rodonit crawling out into the glinting waters of the Adriatic. Tirana and Durazzo were wrapped in the evening haze while Kruya was masked by the massive Kruya Mountain. This was a flat-topped cliff, rising nearly four thousand feet above the plain, and honeycombed with caves — the legendary abode of Said Saltiq, the immortal wizard of Albanian folk-lore. We stayed there nearly two hours, watching the colours fade while Abas Kupi told us of his early struggles. Then we climbed down to a broad meadow, where the guerillas wrestled with each other and played games until darkness made it safe to enter Shkrete, the hamlet where we were to spend the night.

We left Shkrete next morning and proceeded all day at a leisurely pace towards the foot of Mount Kruya. In Mati Abas Kupi had everywhere been received with the respect and honour due to a great guerilla leader; in Kruya he was welcomed with devotion and enthusiasm, for now he was among his own people. He seemed to know each mountaineer we met and for each had a special word of greeting or enquiry. There could be no mistaking his popularity; and even in the

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poorest villages through which we passed the women would run out and kiss his hands or hold up their children to him.

Night overtook us in the trough between the range and Mount Kruya ; and an hour or so later we were received into a dilapidated house, built in a hollow some two hundred feet below the main Mati–Kruya road. There we were to meet representatives of the Zogist Central Committee next morning. Our position was exposed, and doubly so since our presence there was already known to the Committee in Tirana. Abas Kupi therefore posted sentries along the paths leading towards the house, and we slept that night with one eye open.

The representatives of the Zogist Committee, Salih Hoja Vuchitern and Teke Zelenitsa, arrived in the small hours of the morning. Both were badly shaken, for, by a strange irony, the car in which they had travelled from Tirana had been "strafed" on the road by an R.A.F. fighter 'plane. The pilot could hardly have been expected to know that they were on the business of the British Mission, but it was an unfortunate prelude to our talks. Salih Hoja was a Balkan politician of the old school, a blend of peasant guile and Byzantine diplomacy. He had been a powerful influence under King Zog ; but now his close-cropped hair was grown white with years, his voice was querulous, and his hand shook. Zelenitza was a younger man and had been an official in the palace. He was of an acid disposition, and, though more westernised than old Salih, lacked his courtesy and understanding. The two men had come out to press for political concessions, and we saw from the start that they would not agree to fight until some at least of their demands had been granted. Such an attitude was not indeed unnatural, for they were primarily politicians and knew that, once fighting started, it would be too late for them to intervene. Questions of policy would then tend to become subordinated to the immediate needs of war, and the control of the Zogist movement would pass out of their hands.

They began accordingly by repeating the principal demands which Abas Kupi had already made : the inclusion of Albania among the United Nations, the recognition of King Zog, self-determination for the Kossovo, and military support for the

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down, feeling distinctly out of place amid these comfortable surroundings, with our unkempt hair, dirty uniforms, and heavy boots.

Ihsan Bey was still in his early thirties, a well-built and rather studious-looking man, dressed in a grey flannel suit with a white shirt open at the neck. He had studied in Vienna, and indeed might well have been an Austrian country gentleman from his small talk, the cut of his clothes, and the slightly German turn of his English sentences. An attentive host, he plied us in quick succession with tea, coffee, and a very potent *raki*, while we explained the purpose of our visit. Then, seeing that we were tired, he led us to our bedrooms, where clean pyjamas had been laid out. For the first time in months we slept between linen sheets and forgot the fatigues of the march in the delights of a spring mattress. It was after midday when we awoke to the comforts of modern lavatories and hot, scented baths; superfluous luxuries for a guerilla, but doubly welcome for their strangeness.

In the morning, while we still slept, Ihsan had driven into Tirana on our business. He returned about two o'clock, accompanied by Nureddin Bey Vlora, the friend of Count Carlo Frasso, our host at Brindisi, and by a younger man with a charming, French-speaking wife. Nureddin Bey was a son of the Ottoman Grand Vizier, Ferid Pasha, and a nephew of Ismail Kemal, the founder of the first Albanian Republic. A great landowner in the region of Valona, he had been condemned to death, though later pardoned, for his part in the Fieri revolution against King Zog, and had long been one of the most influential supporters of the Republican Party. He was too great a patriot and too proud to "collaborate" with either the Italians or the Germans, but his counsels weighed heavily with the political leaders in Tirana, and especially with the Republican chiefs of the Balli Kombetar.

Still in his forties, Nureddin was fit-looking, debonair, and very much a man of the world. He was dressed in a smart white suit and might just have stepped out of the casino at Mentone or the Mohammed Ali Club in Cairo. His English

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was faultless and, with a sure understanding of the British character, he brought us whisky, for which he had combed Tirana, and excellent cigarettes made of Albanian tobaccos specially blended to his taste. At lunch the talk skimmed lightly from anecdotes to mutual acquaintances in the capitals of Europe; and, with the added charms of feminine company, the barriers of nationality and politics were seemingly dissolved by the pleasures of social intercourse. Such a gathering of Albanian landowners and British officers must have appeared to a Partisan observer as proof positive of the sinister machinations of international reaction. The thought passed through my mind, but I cannot pretend that it seriously diminished my enjoyment of the occasion.

When we had eaten, Ihsan took the other guests apart, and we remained alone with Nureddin. He told us at once that he had just been invited by the Germans either to assume the Premiership or to enter the Council of Regency. His natural instinct had been to decline the thankless task, but he would accept the responsibility if he could thereby assist the Allied cause. The idea of having a friend as head of the "collaborationist" government was certainly tempting and might offer opportunities for attacking the Germans from within. Nevertheless, we strongly advised Nureddin to refuse an invitation which might lead other Albanian Nationalists to line up with the Germans in an anti-Communist front. We then expounded our general policy, condemning collaboration in any form and stressing that we could only support those Albanians who fought against the Germans. We spoke, too, of our concern that the Ballists should be fighting with the enemy against the Partisans and appealed to Nureddin to use his influence with their leaders to bring about a change of policy. He told us that the Ballists would not only cease fighting the Partisans but would gladly co-operate with them against the Germans if only Enver Hoja would abandon his attempt to impose a social revolution on Albania by force. If we could restrain the L.N.C. he was confident that the Ballists would prove amenable; if we could not, then they must fight as best they could, for their lives and property were at stake.

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amuse our leisure; and an old Turkish lady, an aunt of Said Kryeziu, sent us sweetmeats worthy of Haji Bekir, which she had made for us herself.

186 622 In these long hours of waiting Said won our respect by his coolness and sincerity, and our friendship by his sense of humour and understanding. His Western education brought us closer to him than to most of his compatriots; and the objective quality of his mind enabled him to discuss dispassionately the problems of his country. By conviction a Social Democrat, his sympathies had at first inclined towards the Partisans and he had publicly rebuked Abas Kupi for his reluctance to attack the Germans. But he could not condone Enver Hoja's unprovoked attack against the Zogists, and had been deeply shocked by the deliberate destruction of the homes of the Mati *Beys*. He saw now that the Partisans were bent on establishing a regime no less dictatorial than that of the Fascists, and began to fear that the last state of his country might be worse than the first. For us, as British officers, the civil war presented practical problems to be primarily considered in terms of the war with Germany and the protection of British interests. For Said, as an Albanian patriot, it raised moral issues of transcending importance, and brought him face to face with the great ideological division of Europe which the war against Fascism had masked but not healed. At times his disgust with both sides made him long to return to Jakova to escape from politics and serve as a soldier in his brother's forces. He was convinced, however, that only the British could safeguard his country's independence and so agreed, though reluctantly, to stay with us.

7

In the early hours of the 11th August I felt a hand on my shoulder and woke up to hear Maclean saying:

"Tell me what you make of this: it sounds like trouble for someone."

I propped myself up on my elbow and listened in silence, while the sound of firing broke in on the stillness of the night.

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VI

WAR ON TWO FRONTS

> The instant ruin of his country may redound to the hero's glory; yet had he balanced the consequences of submission and resistance, a patriot perhaps would have declined the unequal contest which must depend on the life and genius of one man. Scanderberg might indeed be supported by the rational, though fallacious, hope, that the Pope, the King of Naples and the Venetian Republic would join in the defence of a free and Christian people who guarded the sea coast of the Adriatic and the narrow passage from Greece to Italy.
>
> GIBBON: *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, (Chapter LXVII)

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669 643 701 THE affairs of the Albanian Nationalists drew swiftly on towards their crisis. On the 18th August Fikri Dine and General Prenk Previsi, the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, drove out from Tirana and were conducted to Abas Kupi's headquarters. It was only a few days since Fikri had cut off the funds and food supplies of the Zogists in a last attempt to compel Abas Kupi's submission to his government. Now he and the General were come almost as suppliants to confess their failure to obtain arms or money from the Germans and their conviction that there was nothing more to be hoped for from a policy of "collaboration". They had played the German card against the Partisans and lost. Now they turned naturally to Abas Kupi to sound him as to his hopes of British support and to learn whether they might still save their skins by rallying to his cause.

669 186 This was the moment for which Abas Kupi had been waiting through all the years of his struggle in the mountains. In his eyes the creation of a resistance movement and the search for an agreement with the Allied Mission had been but

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preparations for the day when he could call all Albanians to a general revolt against an enemy too weak ever to regain the initiative. Then, but only then, the military advantage would lie with the insurgents, and the ravages of war would be redeemed by the fruits of victory: power for the leaders and loot for the rank and file. Once before, at the time of the collapse of Italy, he had believed that the time had come and had thrown all his forces into a general revolt. Then, if events had favoured the guerillas, he might have been the arbiter of Albania's destinies, for he had been strong in his own following and had held the balance of power between the Ballists and the Partisans. In those days he had meant to give the "collaborationists" short shrift; but since then the civil war had taken a heavy toll of his strength, and he was now in no position to reject reinforcements from whatever quarter they might come. Fikri and his friends still represented a force to be reckoned with, and, in the eyes of many, their "collaboration" had been all but justified by the fear of Communism which had inspired it. Besides, once they had joined him in the mountains, they would be in his power, and he would be the master. With their support he would make good the losses of the civil war and might hope to do great execution among the retreating Germans. Thereafter the British could no longer refuse him their help, and he would thus be strong enough to compel Enver Hoja to come to terms.

Abas Kupi therefore proposed to his two visitors that the leaders of the Government and of the Balli Kombetar should leave Tirana with all their forces and join him in the mountains to attack the Germans. If they complied he would give them his protection and allocate to them a share of such supplies as he might receive from the British. If they refused he would still take the field alone, but would then regard them as his enemies. All afternoon the three debated this proposal and the Prime Minister and the Commander-in-Chief saw little alternative but to accept. Bitter experience, however, had taught them to distrust the friendship of Great Powers, and, before committing themselves to the precarious refuge of the mountains, they wanted to be sure that Abas Kupi's hopes of

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which presently amounted to some eight hundred men.

In Tirana the Germans sought desperately for friends among the Albanians; at last, on 6th September, they succeeded in forming the shadow of a government under the presidency of Ibrahim Bey Bichaku. The new administration, however, could not rely on a hundred men; and Ibrahim was recommended for office solely by the affection of the German Minister, with whom he played ping-pong every day. As if to mock the impotence of this government Mustafa Kruya, the "arch-collaborationist", now left for Vienna, never to return. Only Jon Marko Joni still hesitated, but he too abandoned the capital and retired to Scutari to watch the fortunes of the Zogists. The days of "collaboration" were over, and Tirana was become nothing but a German redoubt.

Meanwhile the Moslem North was up in arms. The Partisans had overrun Dibra; and the Dibran chiefs, many of them former "collaborationists", had been won over to the L.N.C. by their own incomparable opportunism and the wise diplomacy of Mustafa Jinishi. Tsen Elezi and Dan Kalloshi abandoned the Double Eagle for the Red Star; and, under Partisan direction, their forces were variously engaged in the civil war or the war of liberation. Further north in Liuma Muharrem Bairaktar had already taken the field in the last days of August. He had prepared his attack for some weeks and was finally stung to action by an ltimatum from the German commander in Kukes, who demanded the surrender of two Austrian officers who had deserted from their regiment and had sought his protection. The Partisans had not yet entered Liuma, but Muharrem had already conferred with Mustafa Jinishi, and, though he declined to join the L.N.C., he had agreed to full military co-operation with their forces.

But the fiercest struggle against the Germans in all Albania was led by Gani Kryeziu and his brother, Hassan, with the help of Simcox and his Mission. Since the end of July Gani had been receiving arms from our Headquarters; and the communiqués of his operations were broadcast in the Albanian transmissions of Radio Bari. His influence grew with his successes and the knowledge that he enjoyed British support;

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and he soon rallied to his cause the chiefs of Krasniqi, Puka, and Hass. Meanwhile, stirred by the news of his exploits, volunteers from all over Albania, many of them former officers, or men disappointed with both Zogists and Partisans, made their way to Jakova to serve under his banner; and his forces were still further swollen by deserters from the "collaborationist" army and even from the "Kosmet" Partisans. Throughout the month of August Gani's men were continually engaged against the Germans, and, on the 19th of the month, he led them in person in a full-scale attack against the chrome mines of Kam and Kepenek. In this action the working of the mines was sabotaged, several prisoners were captured, and more than a hundred slave workers released; and Gani was only driven back by strong German units, equipped with armoured cars and artillery.

The North was still free from civil war, but, though Gani continued to treat the "Kosmet" Partisans as his allies, their relations grew increasingly strained. As Communists the "Kosmet" leaders had always been suspicious of Gani's pro-British leanings, nor could they reconcile his policy of winning back the Kossovo for Albania with their allegiance to Marshal Tito. While both had been fighting for their lives these had been matters of small moment, but now that victory was at hand the Partisans began to look on Gani more as a rival than as an ally. Gani, on his side, resented their repeated failure to join him against the Germans, and found his efforts to win over doubtful chiefs continually frustrated by their provocative attitude. Taught by experience, we had long since warned our Headquarters that the time might come when the Partisans would turn against Gani; and indeed they now began to press him to join their movement. Gani, however, declined their invitations as often as they were made, and in this he was supported by our Headquarters, who undertook to "take a strong line" with the L.N.C. should they seek to compel his adherence.

The scene was thus set for a general rising of all Albanians from the borders of Greece to those of Montenegro, and already the resistance movements had mustered powerful

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might be the will of the people, the interests of the leaders worked irresistibly for civil war. That night hopes had been high, but in the morning they were shattered by a despatch from the Zogist headquarters. The Agha had indeed attacked and wiped out a German patrol, but this had been only an incident in the day's fighting. The real battle had been between Zogists and Partisans; and, while they had rent one another, the Germans had watched, and must have smiled, from the ramparts of the citadel. The struggle had been long and bitter, but in the end the Partisans had prevailed. Kruya was lost to the Zogists; and, under cover of night, the Agha had withdrawn his forces across the plain from the last of his strongholds.

While the battle still raged around Kruya we were joined in Mazjhe by Midhat Frasheri and Abas Ermenye, the military commander of the Balli Kombetar. Midhat came on a mule; Abas Ermenye rode a coal-black charger, and, in his blue-green uniform and flat, old-fashioned *képi*, looked like a hero from the Carlist wars. Nor was his romantic appearance belied by his conversation, for he quoted freely from the poems of André Chenier and the speeches of the French revolutionary heroes. He was tall and dark, with sensitive features, but there was something pedantic about his manner; and he seemed always to be worrying about himself. He was a young professor, fired with nationalist sentiment, and fascinated by the glamour of arms. Already, when a colleague of Enver Hoja's at the *Lycée* at Korcha, Abas Ermenye had sought to organise his students to resist the Italian invasion. He had fled to Greece rather than endure foreign rule, and there, in 1940, had vainly sought to raise a force of Albanian *émigrés* to fight alongside the Greek armies. With the fall of Athens he had been captured by the Italians, and had been sent to the concentration camp at Ventotteno, where he had remained nearly two years. In 1942, however, he had been allowed to return to Albania, and, a few months later, had taken to the mountains to organise the Ballist forces in the region of Korcha. Maclean had worked with him against the Italians in 1943,

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and thought him the ablest of the Ballist military leaders; and indeed of those warriors who, like Skender Mucho, Safet Butka, and Husni Lepenitsa, had once been household names among the Tosks, he was now the sole survivor. At heart a reformer, Abas Ermenye sought in the field an escape from the imbroglio of Ballist politics. He knew only that he fought against Communism, and, perhaps just because he doubted whether the Balli Kombetar any longer offered a real alternative, he spared neither himself nor his men.

Midhat and Abas Ermenye had come as political and military delegates of the Balli Kombetar to inform us officially that their whole Central Committee was now in the mountains, and that they had decided to begin operations next day. Abas Ermenye planned to open the campaign with an ambush on the Tirana-Scutari road, and asked that we should send a British officer to watch the conduct of his men and to certify the results of the action. We agreed at once to this request, and Merret was chosen as our liaison officer with the forces of the Balli Kombetar. On the following evening Abas Ermenye duly laid his ambush, and, with a force of two hundred men, surprised a German convoy of forty trucks. Merret afterwards reported that three trucks were burnt, eighteen looted and damaged, eight motor cycles destroyed, and more than thirty Germans killed.

As further evidence of their good-will the Ballist leaders also sent us one Staff-Sergeant Schumacher of the U.S. Air Force, whose 'plane had been shot down to the south of Durazzo in the previous November. After wandering for two days among the coastal lagoons, Schumacher had been rescued by the Ballists, and for nearly a year had been cared for and hidden from the Germans on a farm belonging to Nureddin Vlora. We already had with us another U.S. airman, Sergeant Corsentino, rescued by the Zogists, and the two were to prove a most valuable addition to our Mission, helping in ambushes, road watching, and the drudgery of cipher traffic.

On the 10th September, after an abortive attempt against a bridge, we moved to Preza, where the Zogists and Ballists

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VII

DEFEAT IN VICTORY

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> I believed I was on the right road. . . . But fate was merciless to me when it threw me into this maelstrom. I wanted much, I started much, but the gale of the world carried away me and my work.
>
> GENERAL DRAJA MIHAILOVITCH: *Final speech at his trial in Belgrade, 11th July, 1946*

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Now when Abas Kupi saw that all was lost, he wasted no time in vain regrets or feeble reproaches but manfully resolved to bring his affairs to an honourable conclusion. Pride and resentment might still incline him to join with Muharrem Bairaktar and the Captain of Mirdita to wage a forlorn guerilla against the Partisans, but he had been four years the ally of the British, and loyalty, as well as judgment, forbade him to prolong a struggle which we had condemned. He decided, therefore, as a patriot to spare his countrymen from further useless bloodshed, and, like a prudent man, prepared to make good his own escape. That same afternoon he marched out towards Preza to bid his confederate chiefs farewell and to disband the Zogist forces to their homes. Thereafter he would only maintain a bodyguard, and, having discharged his last duties towards his followers, would return and seek our help to leave Albania and join his king.

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In the Agha's absence we were committed to the care of General Prenk Previsi, the former "collaborationist" Commander-in-Chief. We rode north-eastwards, therefore, from Malibardhe, and, after a two hours' journey through rolling, wooded country, came on his headquarters, a lonely, stone

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Fear stalked through the camp in these last days, but Abas Kupi remained calm to the end. His kindness to us was unfailing; and never by word nor deed did he betray any sign of resentment against his treatment by the British Command. He understood that we were his friends, and always spoke of "our defeat" as if to show that he still identified us with his cause. We had come to know him well during these seven months in which we had so often broken bread together and slept under the same roof, and our respect for him had only grown with intimacy. No man can be great from morning until night, but there was in Abas Kupi a power of leadership, a natural wisdom, and a generous temper which endured the searching test of daily scrutiny. Courage, cunning, energy, and patience are necessary qualities in a guerilla leader, but Abas Kupi's peculiar genius lay in his skill in manipulating men, and in the natural pragmatism of his outlook. He seemed to know just how far each man could be used, and had reduced to a fine art the methods of making others serve his purposes. He would appeal with more than feminine intuition to whatever was strongest or weakest in each individual; and so personal was his technique in these matters that he would never speak with more than one man at a time. Trusting seldom, he could seldom be betrayed; but, if suspicion prevented him from delegating authority, his achievements were perhaps the more remarkable in that he was alone the indispensable heart and nerve-centre of an otherwise invertebrate movement.

He might understand by intuition; he judged only by results; and indeed it often seemed to us that he was deaf to argument and blind to a man's intentions. Such objectivity was proof alike against the sentimental appeal of a demagogue, the scrupulous hesitations of a moralist, or the fine-spun controversies of professional politicians. It was perhaps the real secret of his power, and may explain how an illiterate and primitive tribesman could command the support of intellectuals and could defeat, through four long years, the wiles of a Mustafa Kruya and the casuistry of the missionaries of the Comintern. The soundest calculation, however, proceeds in the last analysis from some act of faith; and trust in British

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power was the first article in the Agha's creed. His desperate situation might suggest that he had been mistaken, yet he still believed that his defeat was only a temporary reverse.

In the long hours of waiting we spoke together more freely than in the past, and our conversations ranged beyond the daily problems of war and politics. The Agha's philosophy was simple and earthbound, and he told me once: "We make our own heaven or hell here, in this world." He regarded power as the greatest driving force in men's lives; for experience had taught him that its possession was the necessary condition of personal freedom and of all good or evil action. In the bitterness of defeat he blamed the weakness of his allies more than the malice of his enemies, but showed the same objectivity in his opinion of people as in his judgment of affairs. A deep distrust of human nature led him to view opponents and supporters with the same detachment, and to judge them solely by their proven records, or their qualities of companionship. Enver Hoja he despised as "a fool", but he spoke with respect of Ymer Dyshnitsa and Seifullah Maleshova, and always referred to Mustafa Jinishi as "my friend". Likewise he spoke with sympathy of Mustafa Kruya, his would-be murderer, and we were once astonished to hear him call Mark Joni Markai "a good boy". As a leader he deplored the fatal suppleness of the Ballist chiefs, but as an ignorant man he bowed before their erudition. He smiled at Muharrem's vanity, and, if his affection for Gani might sometimes seem tinged with jealousy, he often told us of the "brotherly kindness" with which Gani had received him in Belgrade. Gratitude is rare in politics, but, if the Agha could not always reward kindness, at least he never forgot it. He loved the way of life of the tribal anarchy, and deplored the rise to power of new men who had never known, and would not respect, its personal freedom and ancient code of honour. Yet even his regrets were tempered by an instinctive sense of historical proportion; and once, in a more philosophical mood, he told us:

"You know we Ghegs have exploited Albania for generations. Perhaps it is only right that the Tosks should have their turn."

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ABAS KUPI

(Photographed at our last Headquarters in the coastal plain, a few days before the end)

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It was too late to travel to Bari that day, and so we drove out together to spend the afternoon among the ruins of Pompeii. We had scarcely returned to Caserta from this expedition when the telephone rang. It was Smiley, who told us that Abas Kupi with five companions had landed at Brindisi that morning. Honour at least was saved; and yet I felt disappointed that we had not had time to return to Albania and rescue the Agha in a British ship.

It appeared that the night after our departure in the M.A.S., Ihsan and his Montenegrin skipper had put to sea from the Boyana estuary and successfully embarked the Agha and his companions. They had made good headway through the night, and had already come in sight of Brindisi next morning when the engine of the launch had broken down. They had striven to repair it; they had signalled for help; but all their efforts had been in vain and the waves had washed them back to sea. Seven nights and six days they had drifted southward, sustaining life with rain water and the meagre remnant of one night's provisions. They despaired of life, but on the seventh morning, as the current bore them into the Straits of Otranto, they were sighted by a minesweeper and were towed into Brindisi, exhausted but alive.

Their future was for some days the subject of anxious discussion; and Enver Hoja demanded that they be sent back to Albania for trial. The decisions of Caserta, however, had confirmed their status as our friends; and Abas and his sons were lodged with Said and Ihsan in a villa above the little town of Rutigliano.

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Our work was done now, but before leaving Italy we paid a last visit to the Agha and his companions. The day was cold and wet, and the armed sentries patrolling the grounds made the house look like a prison. Indoors the rooms were dark and cheerless, furnished with a few wooden chairs and army beds. It was a drab end to all our dreams; but despite the ruin of his hopes and the personal tragedy of exile — and exile is hard for an old man who can neither read nor write, nor speak a

7: Amery G-5 (1943-44) 1948 EG1 Albania EG1

186 foreign language — the Agha still displayed his old strength of heart and mind.

"I still put my trust in England," he told us. "The future is dark, but one day you will be strong again. As for me, I shall live for the time when we return together to the mountains to take up again the unending battle for freedom."

[Constitution]

643 631 The government or the ministers may annul or suspend any illegal or irregular act of the executive committees. The higher executive committees have the same right over the lower executive committees.

The people's councils may annul or suspend any illegal or irregular act of their own executive committees.

The government and the executive committees of the higher people's councils may suspend the execution of every illegal or irregular act of the lower people's councils or may propose the annulment of such acts.

ARTICLE 91

The Presidium of the People's Convention and the higher people's councils may dissolve the lower people's councils and authorize new elections. Likewise they may suspend executive committees of the lower people's councils and order elections of new executive committees.

TITLE VI

The National Army

ARTICLE 92

701 The National Army is the armed force of the People's Republic of Albania. Its duty is to defend the independence of the state and the freedom of the people.

The army defends the frontiers of the state and guarantees internal peace and security.

ARTICLE 93

The Supreme Commander of the armed forces of the People's Republic of Albania is appointed by the People's Convention.

The Supreme Commander directs all the armed forces of the People's Republic of Albania.

PART THREE

186 *The Seal, Flag, and Capital City*

ARTICLE 94

The seal of the People's Republic of Albania depicts a field

[Constitution]

enclosed by two sheaves of wheat. The sheaves are tied at the bottom with a ribbon on which is written the date, May 24, 1944.

Between the tips of the ears of wheat there is a red pentagonic star. In the center of the field is a black double-headed eagle.

ARTICLE 95

The official flag of the People's Republic of Albania has a red field, in the center of which is a black double-headed eagle. Over the eagle is a pentagonic star, embroidered in gold. The length and breadth of the flag is one by one and forty.

ARTICLE 96

The capital city of the People's Republic of Albania is Tirana.

Tirana, March 14, 1946

The Secretary
Sali Mborja

The President of the Constituent Assembly
(signed) Tuk Jakova

Presidium of the Constituent Assembly

Decree No. 24

Tirana, March 15, 1946

Promulgation of the Constitution of The People's Republic of Albania

According to Law No. 195 of January 12, 1946, the Presidium of the Constituent Assembly decrees the promulgation of the constitution of the People's Republic of Albania, as approved by the Constituent Assembly of March 14, 1946.

Dr. Omer Nishani
General Lt. Kochi Xoxe
General Major Myslim Peza
Nako Spiru
Sami Baholli
General Col. Enver Hoxha
Dr. Medar Shtylla
Prof. S. Maleshova,
Col. Ramadan Chitaku
Dr. Manol Konomi
Hasan Pulo
Qiriako Harito
Pandi Kristo

10: Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EG1 Albania EG1

his case. Since 1912 most of this administrative and penal legislation has been superseded of set purpose by European methods and laws, whereas the social content of the old mountain code has been left comparatively undisturbed, free to come into line with the ways of the West in its own time.

The community sense was fostered by every art the mountaineers knew. Each member of a household was encouraged to regard everything in it and everything its other members said and did as his own. The humblest man was encouraged to regard his village or group of villages as his personal property. If home, village or group of villages prospered, he rejoiced as if he had himself been advanced. If they were insulted or injured, he burned to avenge a personal affront. If they were disgraced by misconduct on the part of another member, he felt his own honour to be smirched. The patriotism so bred was narrow, perhaps, but it was genuine, free from egregious self-seeking, and by its emphasis on the need to keep the community's honour untarnished, a good deterrent from crime.

This close relationship between individual and community was also a curb on dictatorship. The ruling rank had always to respect the individual's property in the community's laws. They could not make any change in an existing law unless they obtained the consent of a General Assembly of their village or tribe. They could impose, but (except in the tribes which maintained fine-collectors) they could not collect fines; social pressure was necessary for that. In a very common punishment, social ostracism, they might play no more than a subordinate part. They could not pass heavy sentences like banishment or death unless a General Assembly demanded them, and if it did, they could not resist its will. In short, the elders voiced, but did not dictate, popular sentiment.

They were no privileged oligarchy either. They might sit in the seat of honour or get the lamb's head and eye at a banquet, but they had no official residences, horses or guards of honour provided for them at public expense. They lived in houses that were often meaner than those of their subordinates; they ate the same food and toiled in the same way in their fields and among their flocks. In fact, the self-government of the Albanian mountaineers went far towards being true democracy in the Anglo-American sense of that much-abused word. In its primitive way it was really government of the People, by the People, for the People. It had

10:Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EG1 Albania EG1

especially near the sea, where the soil is alluvial and stoneless, had to be thirty-two spans wide (7 yards or 6·48 metres) in order to give a pack-horse space to dodge the mud-holes in winter, when the road became a morass. Excellent examples of this type of road traverse the half-drained marshes of Ngurëzë at the mouth of the river Mat.

Mountain roads eight spans wide led to villages 'where carts had never gone'. Certain other roads led to the rare villages 'where carts had gone'. These crossed firm inland plains such as the floor of the valley of Shkrel or the plain of Nangë in Lumë; in Shkrel they had to be twelve spans wide (8 feet or 2·43 metres), and in Lumë wide enough to take a cart. A picturesque detail from Mirditë is that a 'flag-road', that is to say, a road along which a flag was carried in tribal, wedding or other processions, had to be as wide as the flagstaff was long.

Roads always followed boundaries; as a general rule, when one passed two wards or two neighbours, exactly half of it had to be in the territory of each. In other words, their boundary had to run down its exact middle. Few modifications of this law are to be noted. When fields were on a slope, the road between them was often made on the upper one. The elders laying it out had reasoned that it would gradually slip down the hill, increasing the area of the upper field and diminishing that of the lower one. When there was an irrigation channel by the road, rules varied. In Theth one neighbour left three spans of land for the channel, and the other the same amount for the adjacent footpath. Their agreement might be verbal, noted only by witnesses, or it might be written down by the priest as tribal clerk and placed in the church archives. Each neighbour had full access to path and channel alike. In Lumë, on the other hand, a path was left on both sides of an irrigation channel. These were not only for men to walk on but also for maintaining the sides of the channel, a necessary safeguard even on level ground. Each neighbour, having his own path, was less liable to quarrel with the other.

In Perlat a highway was twenty-four spans wide (16 feet or 4·86 metres), to enable a horse laden with firewood to pass another without the loads touching. Elsewhere there was no provision for two-way traffic. Road-making in our sense did not exist, and roads were merely trodden out by man or beast in the scanty space available between fields or across mountain slopes. On a typical

10:Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EGl Albania EGl

would have found themselves involved in a new feud with the household of the man they had killed, but by the local rule of 'circle after circle' he died as proxy for the real criminal and no new feud entered into the question. There seems to have been no time limit to their extended vengeance.

National solidarity was recognized in the debatable border lands where Slav and Albanian lived side by side. If an Albanian was killed by a Slav, any Albanian would kill any Slav in revenge. The crime, it was felt, had pitted the Albanian family against the Slav family. This national sentiment was so strong that though there has never been any love lost between Gegs (north Albanians) and Tosks (south Albanians), no Geg would allow a Slav to kill a Tosk without seeking in return to kill any Slav he could find. The less warlike Tosks did not feel a similar impulse. If one of their number or a Geg were killed by their Bulgarian or Greek neighbours, they left vengeance to the victim's family.

The community also acted as a single family when certain public servants were killed. If the victim were a Roman Catholic priest, he might lawfully be avenged by his parish, the tribe in which the parish lay, and his own family. If action were taken by the parish or tribe, the matter ended. The avenger's act closed the feud, and, fearing no retribution, he could hang up his rifle. If the priest's family afterwards killed another of the murderer's men, they began a new feud. Generally the family did not wait for the parish or the tribe to act. When a Mohammedan or an Orthodox priest was killed, it fell to his relatives to avenge the crime; the feeling that sacrilege had been committed was too slight to drive their parishioners into action.

If a field-guard of Lumë were killed, he was publicly avenged. If the murderer was from another village, any of the field-guard's fellow villagers could lawfully kill any man from the murderer's village during the first twenty-four hours, and afterwards he could kill the murderer or any other man in his household. In either case he could hang up his rifle. If the field-guard were killed by a fellow-villager, the village expelled the murderer. On the other hand, if a miller were killed, vengeance rested with his family; the village could not act. A field-guard was a public necessity; without his services the village economy would suffer, and he must be given public protection. A miller had taken up his work for the sake of private gain and was not a public necessity; if he were not at the

8: Armstrong S-4 (no date) 1951 EF1 Yugoslavia
Albania EF1

Italian shipping centers, also Foggia, reputed to be a prospective bombing base for long-range American operations against the Soviet Union. Meanwhile, the eastern and central Mediterranean basin and much of North Africa, more important than ever in the latest British and American strategy, would be within bombing radius of Jugoslav and Albanian airfields. Tito's withdrawal from the Soviet camp made it necessary to rely solely on Albanian bases for carrying these plans into execution. Without Saseno and the Albanian airfields (of which there were about ten by latest report, half of them developed to the point where they could serve heavy planes), Soviet submarines would be barred from the Mediterranean and Soviet bombers would be pushed back to the Danube valley. We of course have no direct information about the extent of recent Soviet activity on Saseno. However, foreign intelligence services in contact with underground elements inside Albania believe that although newspaper stories about elaborate concrete submarine pens are exaggerated the scale of fortifications makes Saseno a formidable threat to naval movements in the Mediterranean in time of war as well as to military installations in Italy and North Africa.

With such valuable eggs in its little Albanian basket, the Kremlin naturally ordered Prime Minister Hoxha to show the utmost diligence in rooting out any dangerous nationalist sentiments that might appear in the Albanian Communist Party. There had been a nationalist movement of some promise in Albania during the war, but its leaders had lost standing for various reasons—some because they collaborated with the Communists, some because they collaborated with the Nazis when the latter replaced the Italians after the Italian capitulation, some because American and British propaganda tended to favor the Albanian Communists as a way of helping the Jugoslav Partisans, especially after the Allied landing in Italy made it seem possible that Churchill might succeed in having an Allied expedition sent into the Balkans. When Hoxha set up his government in Tirana in November 1944 he maintained the appearance of collaboration with such non-Communist resistance elements as still existed and were willing to join the new "Democratic Front," the organization which now replaced the openly Communist "National Liberation Front" of the war years. But the need for concessions to patriotic

[i.e. Russian political and strategic interests; see cat. 116, pp. 228-229.—Analyst]

8: Armstrong S-4 (no date) 1951 EF1 Yugoslavia
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nationalist and democratic forces in the country diminished as the Communist Party tightened its hold; and following the one-ticket elections of December 2, 1945, it came to an end. The monarchy was abolished in fact as well as in name, the People's Democratic Republic of Albania was proclaimed and the non-Communists who had been collaborating with Hoxha fled abroad or were shot. There followed the agrarian "reforms," the nationalization (confiscation) of such small industry as existed in the country, the elimination of independent shopkeepers and the other measures which so much pleased the Soviet commentator quoted earlier.

Among the strongest incentives to Albanian nationalistic feeling are Albania's claim to the Kossovo area in Jugoslavia, where there is an Albanian minority, and Greece's claim to the Northern Epirus district in southern Albania, where there is a Greek minority. Propaganda in favor of one annexation and counter-propaganda against the other are the habitual stock-in-trade of Albanian patriots.

Italy annexed Kossovo to Albania in 1941—one of Mussolini's cheap rewards for the Nazi victory in Jugoslavia. The action strengthened the Jugoslav resistance, notably on the part of the Serb Chetniks, for the Kossovo plain holds a special place in Serb history and in the hearts of Serb patriots. In the end the district went back to Jugoslavia, after the Italians and later the Germans had been expelled. One of the returns which Hoxha had to make for Tito's material and moral support was to put an end to the former annexationist propaganda in that direction.

Developments on the other front were more favorable to Hoxha. Britain always had been a friend and protector of Greece, from imperial interest as well as Byronic sentiment, and the United States had taken over a share in that rôle under the Truman Doctrine. Hoxha could point to the fact that the two Western Powers were hostile to the Greek Communists as well as to his own Communist régime, whereas the Soviet Union was friendly to both; and on this basis he could argue that if the Greek Royal Government won it would have British and perhaps American support in claiming Northern Epirus, whereas if the Greek Communists won they would be instructed by the Soviet Government to withdraw any claim on another Communist country's territory. On balance, Communism